

Senate Bill No. 1953

CHAPTER 744

An act to amend Sections 144, 7000.5, 7011, 7069, 7092, 7137, 7138.1, and 7153.1 of, and to add Sections 7000.6 and 7017.3 to, the Business and Professions Code, and to amend Section 1095 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, relating to contractors, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor September 20, 2002. Filed
with Secretary of State September 20, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1953, Figueroa. Contractors.

(1) Existing law, the Contractors' State License Law, creates the Contractors' State License Board within the Department of Consumer Affairs. Existing law authorizes the board to appoint a registrar of contractors who is responsible for all of the board's administrative duties. Under existing law, these provisions will become inoperative on July 1, 2003, and will be repealed on January 1, 2004.

This bill would extend these provisions to January 1, 2008. This bill would state that the highest priority for the board, in performing its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions, is the protection of the public.

(2) Existing law requires the board, within 30 days prior to the meeting of the general session of the Legislature, to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature describing its transactions for the preceding biennium.

This bill would require the board to submit an additional report to the Legislature, by October 1 of each year, containing statistical and case aging information, as specified, pertaining to complaints the board received the previous year.

(3) Existing law requires the Director of Consumer Affairs to appoint a Contractors' State License Board Enforcement Program Monitor who is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the board's disciplinary system and reforming the board's enforcement program. Existing law repeals this provision and this position on January 31, 2003.

This bill would extend this provision and this position until April 1, 2003.

(4) Existing law prohibits an applicant, officer, director, partner, associate, and a managing employee from committing any acts or crimes that are grounds for denial of a license. Existing law requires a home

improvement salesperson to submit an application for licensure to the board with the appropriate fee.

This bill would require, on and after January 1, 2004, that all applicants for a contractor's license or a home improvement salesperson license submit a set of fingerprints to the board with his or her application. The bill would require the board to obtain and receive criminal history information from the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a criminal history records check.

(5) Existing law statutorily provides the fees that the board may charge for, among other things, an application for an original license, rescheduling an examination, and the renewal of an active or an inactive license.

This bill would authorize the board to set these fees by regulation, subject to increased fee maximums for specified licenses and services. Because these fees would be deposited into the Contractors' License Fund, which is continuously appropriated, the bill would make an appropriation.

(6) Existing law provides that the board may set fees at a level necessary to generate a 3-month reserve fund based on annual board expenses.

This bill would authorize the board to set fees to maintain the amount of the reserve fund at a level not to exceed approximately 6 months of annual authorized board expenditures.

(7) Existing law authorizes the Director of the Employment Development Department to permit the use of information in his or her possession for specified purposes.

This bill would additionally authorize the director to release information to the board so the board may verify the employment history of an individual applying for a contractor's license.

(8) This bill would incorporate additional changes in Section 144 of the Business and Professions Code proposed by SB 1952, to be operative only if SB 1952 and this bill are both enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2003, and this bill is enacted last.

Appropriation: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 144 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

144. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an agency designated in subdivision (b) shall require an applicant to furnish to the agency a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting criminal history record checks. Any agency designated in subdivision (b) may



obtain and receive, at its discretion, criminal history information from the Department of Justice and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(b) Subdivision (a) applies to the following boards or committees:

- (1) California Board of Accountancy.
- (2) State Athletic Commission.
- (3) Board of Behavioral Sciences.
- (4) Court Reporters Board of California.
- (5) State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind.
- (6) California State Board of Pharmacy.
- (7) Board of Registered Nursing.
- (8) Veterinary Medical Board.
- (9) Registered Veterinary Technician Committee.
- (10) Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians.
- (11) Respiratory Care Board of California.
- (12) Hearing Aid Dispensers Advisory Commission.
- (13) Physical Therapy Board of California.
- (14) Physician Assistant Committee of the Medical Board of California.
- (15) Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board.
- (16) Medical Board of California.
- (17) State Board of Optometry.
- (18) Acupuncture Board.
- (19) Cemetery and Funeral Programs.
- (20) Bureau of Security and Investigative Services.
- (21) Division of Investigation.
- (22) Board of Psychology.
- (23) The California Board of Occupational Therapy.
- (24) Contractors' State License Board.

SEC. 1.5. Section 144 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

144. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an agency designated in subdivision (b) shall require an applicant to furnish to the agency a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting criminal history record checks. Any agency designated in subdivision (b) may obtain and receive, at its discretion, criminal history information from the Department of Justice and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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- (13) Physical Therapy Board of California.
- (14) Physician Assistant Committee of the Medical Board of California.
- (15) Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board.
- (16) Medical Board of California.
- (17) State Board of Optometry.
- (18) Acupuncture Board.
- (19) Cemetery and Funeral Bureau.
- (20) Bureau of Security and Investigative Services.
- (21) Division of Investigation.
- (22) Board of Psychology.
- (23) The California Board of Occupational Therapy.
- (24) Contractors' State License Board.

SEC. 2. Section 7000.5 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7000.5. (a) There is in the Department of Consumer Affairs a Contractors' State License Board, which consists of 15 members.

(b) The repeal of this section renders the board subject to the review required by Division 1.2 (commencing with Section 473). However, the review of this board by the department shall be limited to only those unresolved issues identified by the Joint Legislative Sunset Review Committee.

(c) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2007, and, as of January 1, 2008, is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, which becomes effective on or before January 1, 2008, deletes or extends the dates on which it becomes inoperative and is repealed.

SEC. 3. Section 7000.6 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

7000.6. Protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the Contractors' State License Board in exercising its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions. Whenever the protection of the public is inconsistent with other interests sought to be promoted, the protection of the public shall be paramount.

SEC. 4. Section 7011 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:



7011. The board by and with the approval of the director shall appoint a registrar of contractors and fix his or her compensation.

The registrar shall be the executive officer and secretary of the board and shall carry out all of the administrative duties as provided in this chapter and as delegated to him or her by the board.

For the purpose of administration of this chapter, there may be appointed a deputy registrar, a chief reviewing and hearing officer and, subject to Section 159.5, other assistants and subordinates as may be necessary.

Appointments shall be made in accordance with the provisions of civil service laws.

This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2007, and, as of January 1, 2008, is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, which becomes effective on or before January 1, 2008, deletes or extends the dates on which it becomes inoperative and is repealed.

SEC. 5. Section 7017.3 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

7017.3. The Contractors' State License Board shall report annually to the Legislature, not later than October 1 of each year, the following statistical information for the prior fiscal year. The following data shall be reported on complaints filed with the board against licensed contractors, registered home improvement salespersons, and unlicensed persons acting as licensees or registrants:

(a) The number of complaints received by the board categorized by source, such as public, trade, profession, government agency, or board-initiated, and by type of complaint, such as licensee or nonlicensee.

(b) The number of complaints closed prior to referral for field investigation, categorized by the reason for the closure, such as settled, referred for mandatory arbitration, or referred for voluntary arbitration.

(c) The number of complaints referred for field investigation categorized by the type of complaint such as licensee or nonlicensee.

(d) The number of complaints closed after referral for field investigation categorized by the reason for the closure such as settled, referred for mandatory arbitration, or referred for voluntary arbitration.

(e) For the board's Intake/Mediation Center and the board's Investigation Center closures, respectively, the total number of complaints closed prior to a field investigation per consumer services representative, and the total number of complaints closed after referral for a field investigation per enforcement representative. Additionally, the board shall report the total number of complaints closed by other board staff during the year.



(f) The number of complaints pending at the end of the fiscal year grouped in 90-day increments, and the percentage of total complaints pending, represented by the number of complaints in each grouping.

(g) The number of citations issued to licensees categorized by the type of citation such as order of correction only or order of correction and fine and the number of citations issued to licensees that were vacated or withdrawn.

(h) The number of citations issued to nonlicensees and the number of these citations that were vacated or withdrawn.

(i) The number of complaints referred to a local prosecutor for criminal investigation or prosecution, the number of complaints referred to the Attorney General for the filing of an accusation, and the number of complaints referred to both a local prosecutor and the Attorney General, categorized by type of complaint, such as licensee and nonlicensee.

(j) Actions taken by the board, including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The number of disciplinary actions categorized by type, such as revocations or suspensions, categorized by whether the disciplinary action resulted from an accusation, failure to comply with a citation, or failure to comply with an arbitration award.

(2) The number of accusations dismissed or withdrawn.

(k) For subdivisions (g) and (j), the number of cases containing violations of Section 7121, 7121.5, and subdivision (e) of Section 7159 categorized by section.

(l) The number of interim suspension orders sought, the number of interim suspension orders granted, the number of temporary restraining orders sought, and the number of temporary restraining orders granted.

(m) The amount of cost recovery ordered and the amount collected.

(n) Case aging data, including data for each major stage of the enforcement process, including the following:

(1) The average number of days from the filing of a complaint to its closure by the board's Intake/Mediation Center prior to the referral for an investigation categorized by the type of complaint, such as licensee or nonlicensee.

(2) The average number of days from the referral of a complaint for an investigation to its closure by the Investigation Center categorized by the type of complaint, such as licensee or nonlicensee.

(3) The average number of days from the filing of a complaint to the referral of the completed investigation to the Attorney General.

(4) The average number of days from the referral of a completed investigation to the Attorney General to the filing of an accusation by the Attorney General.



(5) The average number of days from the filing of an accusation to the first hearing date or date of a stipulated settlement.

(6) The average number of days from the receipt of the Administrative Law Judge's proposed decision to the registrar's final decision.

SEC. 6. Section 7069 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7069. (a) An applicant, and each officer, director, partner, associate and responsible managing employee thereof, shall not have committed acts or crimes which are grounds for denial of licensure under Section 480.

(b) As part of an application for a contractor's license, the board shall require an applicant to furnish a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting a criminal history record check. Fingerprints furnished pursuant to this subdivision shall be submitted in an electronic format where readily available. Requests for alternative methods of furnishing fingerprints are subject to the approval of the registrar. The board shall use the fingerprints furnished by an applicant to obtain criminal history information on the applicant from the Department of Justice and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, including any subsequent arrest information available. This subdivision shall become operative on January 1, 2004.

SEC. 7. Section 7092 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7092. (a) (1) The director shall appoint a Contractors' State License Board Enforcement Program Monitor no later than January 31, 2001. The director may retain a person for this position by a personal services contract, the Legislature finding, pursuant to Section 19130 of the Government Code, that this is a new state function.

(2) The director shall supervise the enforcement program monitor and may terminate or dismiss him or her from this position.

(b) The director shall advertise the availability of this position. The requirements for this position include experience in conducting investigations and familiarity with state laws, rules, and procedures pertaining to the board and familiarity with relevant administrative procedures.

(c) (1) The enforcement program monitor shall monitor and evaluate the Contractors' State License Board disciplinary system and procedures, making as his or her highest priority the reform and reengineering of the board's enforcement program and operations, and the improvement of the overall efficiency of the board's disciplinary system.



(2) This monitoring duty shall be on a continuing basis for a period of no more than two years from the date of the enforcement program monitor's appointment and shall include, but not be limited to, improving the quality and consistency of complaint processing and investigation and reducing the timeframes for each, reducing any complaint backlog, assuring consistency in the application of sanctions or discipline imposed on licensees, and shall include the following areas: the accurate and consistent implementation of the laws and rules affecting discipline, staff concerns regarding disciplinary matters or procedures, appropriate utilization of licensed professionals to investigate complaints, and the board's cooperation with other governmental entities charged with enforcing related laws and regulations regarding contractors.

(3) The enforcement program monitor shall exercise no authority over the board's discipline operations or staff; however, the board and its staff shall cooperate with him or her, and the board shall provide data, information, and case files as requested by the enforcement program monitor to perform all of his or her duties.

(4) The director shall assist the enforcement program monitor in the performance of his or her duties, and the enforcement program monitor shall have the same investigative authority as the director.

(d) The enforcement program monitor shall submit an initial written report of his or her findings and conclusions to the board, the department, and the Legislature no later than October 1, 2001, and every six months thereafter, and be available to make oral reports to each, if requested to do so. The enforcement program monitor may also provide additional information to either the department or the Legislature at his or her discretion or at the request of either the department or the Legislature. The enforcement program monitor shall make his or her reports available to the public or the media. The enforcement program monitor shall make every effort to provide the board with an opportunity to reply to any facts, findings, issues, or conclusions in his or her reports with which the board may disagree.

(e) The board shall reimburse the department for all of the costs associated with the employment of an enforcement program monitor.

(f) This section shall remain in effect only until April 1, 2003, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before April 1, 2003, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 8. Section 7137 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7137. The board shall set fees by regulation. These fees shall not exceed the following schedule:



(a) The application fee for an original license in a single classification shall not be more than three hundred dollars (\$300).

The application fee for each additional classification applied for in connection with an original license shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

The application fee for each additional classification pursuant to Section 7059 shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

The application fee to replace a responsible managing officer or employee pursuant to Section 7068.2 shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

(b) The fee for rescheduling an examination for an applicant who has applied for an original license, additional classification, a change of responsible managing officer or responsible managing employee, or for an asbestos certification or hazardous substance removal certification, shall not be more than sixty dollars (\$60).

(c) The fee for scheduling or rescheduling an examination for a licensee who is required to take the examination as a condition of probation shall not be more than sixty dollars (\$60).

(d) The initial license fee for an active or inactive license shall not be more than one hundred eighty dollars (\$180).

(e) The renewal fee for an active license shall not be more than three hundred sixty dollars (\$360).

The renewal fee for an inactive license shall not be more than one hundred eighty dollars (\$180).

(f) The delinquency fee is an amount equal to 50 percent of the renewal fee, if the license is renewed more than 30 days after its expiration.

(g) The registration fee for a home improvement salesperson shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

(h) The renewal fee for a home improvement salesperson registration shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

(i) The application fee for an asbestos certification examination shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

(j) The application fee for a hazardous substance removal or remedial action certification examination shall not be more than seventy-five dollars (\$75).

SEC. 9. Section 7138.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7138.1. Notwithstanding Section 7137, the board shall fix fees to be collected pursuant to that section in order to generate revenues sufficient to maintain the board's reserve fund at a level not to exceed approximately six months of annual authorized board expenditures.



SEC. 10. Section 7153.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7153.1. (a) The home improvement salesperson shall submit to the registrar an application in writing containing the statement that he or she desires the issuance of a registration under the terms of this article.

The application shall be made on a form prescribed by the registrar and shall be accompanied by the fee fixed by this chapter.

(b) The registrar may refuse to register the applicant under the grounds specified in Section 480.

(c) As part of an application for a home improvement salesperson, the board shall require an applicant to furnish a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting criminal history record checks. Fingerprints furnished pursuant to this subdivision shall be submitted in an electronic format where readily available. Requests for alternative methods of furnishing fingerprints are subject to the approval of the registrar. The board shall use the fingerprints furnished by an applicant to obtain criminal history information on the applicant from the Department of Justice and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, including any subsequent arrest information available. This subdivision shall become operative on January 1, 2004.

SEC. 11. Section 1095 of the Unemployment Insurance Code is amended to read:

1095. The director shall permit the use of any information in his or her possession to the extent necessary for any of the following purposes and may require reimbursement for all direct costs incurred in providing any and all information specified in this section, except information specified in subdivisions (a) to (e), inclusive:

(a) To enable the director or his or her representative to carry out his or her responsibilities under this code.

(b) To properly present a claim for benefits.

(c) To acquaint a worker or his or her authorized agent with his or her existing or prospective right to benefits.

(d) To furnish an employer or his or her authorized agent with information to enable him or her to fully discharge his or her obligations or safeguard his or her rights under this division or Division 3 (commencing with Section 9000).

(e) To enable an employer to receive a reduction in contribution rate.

(f) To enable federal, state, or local government departments or agencies, subject to federal law, to verify or determine the eligibility or entitlement of an applicant for, or a recipient of, public social services provided pursuant to Division 9 (commencing with Section 10000) of the Welfare and Institutions Code, or Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, where the verification or determination is directly



connected with, and limited to, the administration of public social services.

(g) To enable county administrators of general relief or assistance, or their representatives, to determine entitlement to locally provided general relief or assistance, where the determination is directly connected with, and limited to, the administration of general relief or assistance.

(h) To enable state or local governmental departments or agencies to seek criminal, civil, or administrative remedies in connection with the unlawful application for, or receipt of, relief provided under Division 9 (commencing with Section 10000) of the Welfare and Institutions Code or to enable the collection of expenditures for medical assistance services pursuant to Part 5 (commencing with Section 17000) of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(i) To provide any law enforcement agency with the name, address, telephone number, birth date, social security number, physical description, and names and addresses of present and past employers, of any victim, suspect, missing person, potential witness, or person for whom a felony arrest warrant has been issued, when a request for this information is made by any investigator or peace officer as defined by Sections 830.1 and 830.2 of the Penal Code, or by any federal law enforcement officer to whom the Attorney General has delegated authority to enforce federal search warrants, as defined under Sections 60.2 and 60.3 of Title 28 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as amended, and when the requesting officer has been designated by the head of the law enforcement agency and requests this information in the course of and as a part of an investigation into the commission of a crime when there is a reasonable suspicion that the crime is a felony and that the information would lead to relevant evidence. The information provided pursuant to this subdivision shall be provided to the extent permitted by federal law and regulations, and to the extent the information is available and accessible within the constraints and configurations of existing department records. Any person who receives any information under this subdivision shall make a written report of the information to the law enforcement agency that employs him or her, for filing under the normal procedures of that agency.

(1) This subdivision shall not be construed to authorize the release to any law enforcement agency of a general list identifying individuals applying for or receiving benefits.

(2) The department shall maintain records pursuant to this subdivision only for periods required under regulations or statutes enacted for the administration of its programs.



(3) This subdivision shall not be construed as limiting the information provided to law enforcement agencies to that pertaining only to applicants for, or recipients of, benefits.

(4) The department shall notify all applicants for benefits that release of confidential information from their records will not be protected should there be a felony arrest warrant issued against the applicant or in the event of an investigation by a law enforcement agency into the commission of a felony.

(j) To provide public employee retirement systems in California with information relating to the earnings of any person who has applied for or is receiving a disability income, disability allowance, or disability retirement allowance, from a public employee retirement system. The earnings information shall be released only upon written request from the governing board specifying that the person has applied for or is receiving a disability allowance or disability retirement allowance from its retirement system. The request may be made by the chief executive officer of the system or by an employee of the system so authorized and identified by name and title by the chief executive officer in writing.

(k) To enable the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement in the Department of Industrial Relations to seek criminal, civil, or administrative remedies in connection with the failure to pay, or the unlawful payment of, wages pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 200) of Part 1 of Division 2 of, and Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 1720) of Part 7 of Division 2 of, the Labor Code.

(l) To enable federal, state, or local governmental departments or agencies to administer child support enforcement programs under Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 651 et seq.).

(m) To provide federal, state, or local governmental departments or agencies with wage and claim information in its possession that will assist those departments and agencies in the administration of the victims of crime program or in the location of victims of crime who, by state mandate or court order, are entitled to restitution that has been or can be recovered.

(n) To provide federal, state, or local governmental departments or agencies with information concerning any individuals who are or have been:

(1) Directed by state mandate or court order to pay restitution, fines, penalties, assessments, or fees as a result of a violation of law.

(2) Delinquent or in default on guaranteed student loans or who owe repayment of funds received through other financial assistance programs administered by those agencies. The information released by the director for the purposes of this paragraph shall not include unemployment insurance benefit information.



(o) To provide an authorized governmental agency with any or all relevant information that relates to any specific workers' compensation insurance fraud investigation. The information shall be provided to the extent permitted by federal law and regulations. For the purposes of this subdivision, "authorized governmental agency" means the district attorney of any county, the office of the Attorney General, the Department of Industrial Relations, and the Department of Insurance. An authorized governmental agency may disclose this information to the State Bar, the Medical Board of California, or any other licensing board or department whose licensee is the subject of a workers' compensation insurance fraud investigation. This subdivision shall not prevent any authorized governmental agency from reporting to any board or department the suspected misconduct of any licensee of that body.

(p) To enable the Director of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education, or his or her representatives, to access unemployment insurance quarterly wage data on a case-by-case basis to verify information on school administrators, school staff, and students provided by those schools who are being investigated for possible violations of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 94700) of Part 59 of the Education Code.

(q) To provide employment tax information to the tax officials of Mexico, if a reciprocal agreement exists. For purposes of this subdivision, "reciprocal agreement" means a formal agreement to exchange information between national taxing officials of Mexico and taxing authorities of the State Board of Equalization, the Franchise Tax Board, and the Employment Development Department. Furthermore, the reciprocal agreement shall be limited to the exchange of information that is essential for tax administration purposes only. Taxing authorities of the State of California shall be granted tax information only on California residents. Taxing authorities of Mexico shall be granted tax information only on Mexican nationals.

(r) To enable city and county planning agencies to develop economic forecasts for planning purposes. The information shall be limited to businesses within the jurisdiction of the city or county whose planning agency is requesting the information, and shall not include information regarding individual employees.

(s) To provide the State Department of Developmental Services with wage and employer information that will assist in the collection of moneys owed by the recipient, parent, or any other legally liable individual for services and supports provided pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 4775) of Division 4.5 of, and Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 7200) and Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 7500) of Division 7 of, the Welfare and Institutions Code.



(t) Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize or permit the use of information obtained in the administration of this code by any private collection agency.

(u) The disclosure of the name and address of an individual or business entity that was issued an assessment that included penalties under Section 1128 or 1128.1 shall not be in violation of Section 1094 if the assessment is final. The disclosure may also include any of the following:

(1) The total amount of the assessment.

(2) The amount of the penalty imposed under Section 1128 or 1128.1 that is included in the assessment.

(3) The facts that resulted in the charging of the penalty under Section 1128 or 1128.1.

(v) To enable the Contractors' State License Board to verify the employment history of an individual applying for licensure pursuant to Section 7068 of the Business and Professions Code.

SEC. 12. Section 1.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 144 of the Business and Professions Code proposed by both this bill and SB 1952. It shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2003, (2) each bill amends Section 144 of the Business and Professions Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after SB 1952, in which case Section 1 of this bill shall not become operative.

